



News from the Savannah River National Laboratory

March 16, 2006 For immediate release

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SRNL Tapped to Serve DOE Environmental Management Technology Needs

AIKEN, S.C. – The U.S. Department of Energy has designated the Savannah River National Laboratory as the DOE Office of Environmental Management's (EM) "Corporate Laboratory." As the EM Corporate Laboratory, SRNL will apply its unique expertise and applied technology capabilities to assist DOE sites across the nation in meeting cleanup requirements.

EM's mission is the accelerated risk reduction and cleanup of the environmental legacy of the nation's nuclear weapons program. The program is one of the largest and most diverse and technically complex environmental cleanup programs in the world and includes responsibility for the cleanup of 114 sites across the country. Included in that responsibility is the need to:

- Safely disposition large volumes of nuclear wastes;
- Safeguard materials that could be used in nuclear weapons; and,
- Deactivate and decommission several thousand contaminated facilities no longer needed to support the Department's mission and remediate extensive surface and groundwater contamination.

These tasks, according to a letter to the EM field offices from Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for EM Charles E. Anderson, are technically complex and require innovative and advanced technologies to achieve success. In particular, applied research is needed to enhance projects to stabilize high-level radioactive waste, clean up groundwater and soils, deactivate and decommission legacy facilities, and stabilize and dispose of transuranic, plutonium and spent fuel wastes.

For many years, SRNL has helped sites throughout the DOE complex by providing innovative technology solutions in these and related areas. "This new designation as EM's Corporate Laboratory recognizes SRNL as a key resource for EM and its programs at sites around the country, and gives the Laboratory a new mandate to

provide targeted technical assistance and technology solutions for cleanup efforts at DOE sites,” says Jeffrey Allison, Manager of the DOE-Savannah River Operations Office. “As EM’s Corporate Laboratory, SRNL will use its applied research leadership to help DOE sites overcome technical barriers to accelerating cleanup, achieve cost reductions, and increase safety.”

SRNL will also lead a team made up of senior personnel from the other DOE National Laboratories, in order to utilize the broad base of knowledge that the National Laboratory system represents. Although SRNL is the only National Laboratory sponsored by EM, there is substantial environmental expertise at these other labs as well, and SRNL has traditionally worked with the other labs to take advantage of complementary skills.

“SRNL has demonstrated world-class capabilities in a number of areas that are extremely important to EM and its field sites,” says SRNL Laboratory Director Dr. G. Todd Wright. “What makes us particularly valuable is the applied nature of our work. The Laboratory’s scientists and engineers put science to work to identify, develop and implement practical technology solutions that work.”

Anderson sent the managers at all of EM’s field offices information on SRNL’s capabilities that are available to assist them. These include capabilities such as SRNL’s comprehensive technical expertise in the characterization, processing and stabilization of high-level radioactive waste; in the closure of high-level waste storage tanks; in characterizing and cleaning up groundwater and soil; in processing, packaging and transport, and disposition of legacy nuclear materials; in the management, storage and processing of spent nuclear fuel; in the surveillance and packaging of nuclear material; in the effects of hydrogen on materials; in hydrogen storage; and in modeling and flowsheet development to support these activities.

SRNL is the applied research and development laboratory at DOE’s Savannah River Site. It is managed for DOE by Washington Savannah River Company, a subsidiary of Washington Group International.

WSRC-06-11